China proper lies between 18° & 43° N. Lat & between 98° & 123° Lon- E of Greenwich. It is divided into 18 provinces viz Chihle, Shantung, Shanse, Honan on the North- Keansoo & ~~Hoan~~ Ganwhuy Keangse Chekeang & Fuhkeen on the East, Hoopih & Hoonan in the middle - Shense Kansuh & Szechuen on the west - Kwantung Kwanse Yunnan Kweichow on the South. The coast is rugged & rendered difficult of access to heavy vessels by rocks & quicksands. With the exception of Chihle Keangsoo & part of Sanwhuy it is mountainous. The two principal chains of mountains are in the N.W. & S.E. The former abounds in extensive coal pits. The latter ~~possess~~ gold, silver, iron tin & copper mines in great abundance. It ~~possesses~~ has been occupied from time immemorial by an uncivilized but independent race of men governed by chiefs whose office is in some tribes hereditary & in others elective. The principal rivers are Hoang ho Kiang ku & Yoang Kiang. The first are 2000 miles in length & many of their tributaries are equal in size to the largest rivers in Europe. The advantages of these rivers are increased by canals running through every portion of the Empire.

The climate is various. The western provinces on account of proximity to the mountains of central Asia are subject to extreme cold while the

seasons of the Eastern provinces are moderated by the Ocean. At Canton in the South the mean degree of heat is 76, at Pekin in the north it is 55. The first is much warmer & the latter much colder than countries of corresponding latitudes in Europe. Hurricanes are frequent during the equinoxes, but the rest of the year is crowned with a serene sky & delightful weather.

As China extends 1300 miles in Latitude it produces almost every variety of plant & is inhabited by almost every species of animal found in the torrid & temperate zones. Agriculture is held in higher estimation than any other employment. Consequently although much land is uncultivated, China is as a whole in a high state of cultivation. Large portions of the country yield two abundant crops annually one of rice - the other of wheat. This fruitfulness, considered in connexion with the fact that little animal food is eaten except fish, & that a large quantity of food which in other countries would be thrown away is here eaten by men, or devoured by cattle is here eaten by men, point it out as a land capable of sustaining an immense population.

Three facts seem to justify the opinion that the number of inhabitants is already as great as can well be supported. 1st The existence of many thousands of pirates on the coast would appear to indicate that subsistence by agriculture is precarious 2nd Famines are sometimes so distressing that parents sell their children for food 3rd the diet of the lower classes is in many places so scanty, that any article is willingly bartered for food. If it be taken for granted that the population is as great as can be supported, there shall be no difficulty in crediting the statement that this vast empire contains 333.000.000 of souls. The statement referred to was made by the English embassy rested on the assertion of a revenue officer at Pekin. That this officer was able to give a correct census is evident from the fact that the whole empire is minutely divided & that in each division there is a constable who daily who reports the names of all persons

within his district. These names are sent up from each district to the national board of revenue & thus the revenue officer has before him an accurate census of the nation. The honesty of the individual upon whom the English embassy relied for information on this subject is strongly affirmed by Lord Macartney. Dr. Morison & others travellers of high authority consider his estimate exaggerated, but a late writer in the Chinese repository confirms it, & supposes that since the estimate was made the population has increased to 360.000.000. One written language is understood throughout the whole empire, & many populous islands in the Indian archipelago a tract published at Canton may be read by almost every adult in a district secluded between Siberia & Mantchou Tartary on the north & the Chinese sea on the south the Pacific on the east & Hindoostan on the west. The travelling missionary though unacquainted with the dialects respectively peculiar to the different provinces visited by him, may by writing converse with the people in them all.

The Government is nominally patriarchal. Imperial edicts are couched in terms of advice as from a father to his children. Notwithstanding this, the emperor's power is unlimited, & his paternal counsel often involves property & life. Though the Laws are generally good, for an unchristianized nation they are so numerous that no one can be a subject & not a transgressor. Consequently every officer administers them with that degree of rigor which suits him. This discretionary power, which every ruler is expected to exercise, renders bribery common & the relaxation of punishment so frequent that the laws are inefficient.

In the people of China, there is almost as much diversity as in the climate. In some districts they are inquisitive in others dull. In some they are quarrelsome & indolent - in others industrious & peaceable. The character of the northern inhabitants, is generally better than that of the southern. The prevailing characteristics of the country, are national pride selfishness, industry, servility fickleness & duplicity & filthiness. Their filthiness is almost incredible. Ladies of the highest rank commonly wear through life the cotton bandage which bound their feet in infancy. Vestments are seldom removed for cleansing. The consequence is an increase of vermin. Even officers make no scruple of calling servants in public to seek on their necks these troublesome animals. Intoxication by opium, is universal. That narcotic produces all the stupifying, enervating & demoralizing effects of brandy. Wine is also used intemperately & extensively. Gambling is so common that at almost every corner in the towns, groups are to be found playing at games of chance. A Chinese seldom goes abroad without cards & dice. On the hazard of a die he often stakes his wife & children. Cock-fighting & quail-fighting are the fashionable modes of gambling among the higher classes. Though debauchery is not so common as in many other heathen countries it is attended with so little sense of shame, that ~~public~~ officers ~~avow~~ publicly & unhesitatingly avow the commission of it. Mr Gutzlaff says the Chinese sailors are universally opium smokers, fornicators, theives, & gamblers. In China as in other heathen countries woman is degraded. Among the lower classes, the wife & daughter works in the field. It is not uncommon to see a female working with an infant upon her back~~ing~~, or drawing a light plough~~ing~~ which

her husband is directing. Though rich ladies do not perform severe labor their condition is perhaps less desirable than that of the poor. The cramping of their feet deprives them of liberty; it is crime for them to be seen abroad & their personal accomplishments, only render them subservient to the sensual gratification the caprice & the jealousy of man. At the age of nine the sister is entirely seperated from her brothers & commences a life of solitude. When arrived ~~at the~~ she has arrived at the proper age, she is sold to the highest bidder, & does not see her husband until the day of marriage. She is never permitted to sit at the same table with him, nor manifest any other relation towards him than that of a slave to a tyrant. If a favorite she is retained through life, if not she is again sold for ~~a~~ further purchase money.

The State of knowledge in China is an interesting & curious subject. It can only be glanced at in an essay of this length, without excluding other subjects of importance. In Philosophy & Chemistry though there is no general system in which facts are compared & classified, there are many books on detatched subjects in each, full of processes by which chemical & mechanical effects may be produced. On physic they have many works, but the internal structure of the frame is never mentioned in them. To every part of the body, a pulse is assigned & the skill of the physician consists in discovering the diseased member by distinguishing the prevailing pulse. The mummery made use of for this purpose is highly ludicrous. * Of arithmetic the first operations are unknown. Merchants calculate not by figures, but mechanically by an ingenious machine called the Abacus or Swanpan. In geography the Chinese are children. Their maps sketch the world as a great plain of which China is the centre. Their favorite science is astronomy. The motion of the fixed stars from

, west to east of five of the planets, & the intricate motion of the moon have been long known to them, but their ideas on many subjects connected with this science are crude & limited. In some arts such as flower-painting, ivory cutting, manufacture of porcelain & Japan ware &c they excel all other nations. They remarked the polarity of the needle before Christians ~~nation~~, but they do not apply it to navigation. Sailors seldom go out of sight of land, & when they do, they regulated by the stars. It is generally belived that they understood the art of printing before the Europeans. In this operation they use engraved blocks. Though this ~~mode of printing is deficient~~ ~~do not furnish as~~ is wanting in economy & rapidity, it is supposed to better adapted to the Chinese language than any other ~~kind of types~~. Mr Dyer of Penang proposes the casting of moveable types. The other missionaries disapprove of his suggestion for two reasons. 1st The number of Chinese characters is so great that a fount would be very expensive. 2nd The aparatus for block printing is convenient for transportation. It is more convenient for missionaries to take blocks with them & print tracts as they need them, than to carry the large mass of tracts which is required during their long tours. Instead of moveable types, ~~the A B C &c~~ ~~intend to have~~ metallic plates have been cast by the A B C &c of wood after the model of the wooden ones. The advantages ~~contemplated by~~ of this change are neatness & permanency. †

There are two periodicals published by the Chinese - an annual calendar & a daily gazette. Both are issued by government. The latter is circulated through every part of the nation & is used to subserve the purposes of the Emperor.

Their massive literature consists principally of poems & works on astronomy mathematics & medecine. Some of these are correct, & all of them are more indicative of talent than those found in other heathen nations but they are generally insipid & whimsical. The

state of education is better than in other portions of the pagan world. ~~in the heathen nations~~ Children are generally taught to read & indoctrinated into the system of Confucius. Contests in writing are held semiannually before the mandarins & there are three literary degrees suited to different grades of scholarship conferred by national appointment. It's chief aim is to teach children the language. In order to effect this, teachers compel their pupils to write or commit unintelligible verses. Education however is entirely mechanical. So little reference has the system of instruction to development of intellect, that a writer in the Chinese repository affirms the first book which is placed in a child's hand to be as difficult of comprehension as would be Euclid's elements in verse. Here as in other heathen lands the mind must be enlightened rendered inquisitive & made to think before the gospel can work with its legitimate efficiency in the conversion of men. This state of things will be ~~result~~ brought about by the gospel itself. It prepares its own way. One of the greatest obstacles to march of mind in this empire is the peculiar structure of the language. It has no alphabet ~~& but few words.~~ Its words are all monosyllables. Though the highest number of primitive words given by any dictionary is 484, & it is generally supposed there are not more than 330 their sense may be infinitely multiplied by accents, aspirations & other changes of the voice used in pronouncing them. To distinguish between ~~tones~~ accents nearly resembling one another in sound but widely differing in sense requires great nicety of pronunciation, & acuteness of hearing. To prevent doubt about his meaning the speaker often uses synonomous words; & if uncertainty still remain, he traces the character which would express his idea, with his fan, or finger in the air. Many written characters ~~characters~~ have no corresponding sound. While there are but 1500 distinct sounds, there are 80,000 forms of letters. Some of these consist of seventy straight lines. The study of this language is not only perplexing to youth, but to the foreigner both tedious & difficult.

It is tedious because in this as in other hieroglyphic languages, each character ~~denotes an object~~ expresses an idea. The student Before the student is fully prepared to read he must be able to distinguish between eighty thousand characters.

It is difficult for 2 reasons 1st The characters are often abridged figures & a sentence is therefore a string of metaphors. 2nd The Chinese words are indeclinable & the auxiliaries which connect them in the oral language are generally omitted in the written. The student must be constantly exercising his judgment in supplying words. This judgment must be guided by attention to the manners, laws & opinions of the Chinese & the local circumstances of the country to which allusions of the language constantly refer.

It is encouraging to know that a large number of written characters are found in no books except those which are read by a select few of the higher classes. A knowledge of them is not essential in order that the missionary may be able to read most chinese books & write on almost every subject. The peculiar qualifications for this field are facility for acquiring languages & knowledge of medicine. The latter qualification is rendered important by the fact that cutaneous affections caused by filthiness, & a disease attendant on opium smoking are met with in almost every house & the Chinese doctors cannot ~~treat~~ are too ignorant to cure either these or any other infirmities ~~disease~~.

It seems to have contributed much to the success of Morrison & Gutzlaff as the practice of medicine is essential in prosecuting this mission & it is encouraging to know that the diseases of the country are remarkably simple & uniform.

The principal religions of China are Confucianism, Taoism & Buddism or the religion of Foe. The writings of Confucius contain a pretty correct system of politics & external morality, but they are silent on the existence of God, & immortality of the soul. The word death does not occur in any of his writings. The procreation of all things is explained by considering the elements male & female. His followers are pantheists. They anticipate no future state of existence & disregard every thing which is not immediately connected

with present welfare. Taouism, whose founder Laoitze was contemporary with Confucius, contains the doctrine of a future state darkly expressed & teaches the existence of a Supreme Being. It however encourages idolatry & asserts the agency of demons. Priests of this sect are alchymists they are well acquainted with animal magnetism & profess to have the liquid which confers immortality. The religion of Foe though not introduced into China until A.D. 70 is the religion of the common people. It teaches that the world is a self-existent machinery, that every particle is an emanation from a vast vacuum which will again gradually absorb all things, that the souls of men & beasts transmigrate until they arrive at the highest pitch of tranquility - annihilation, that most speedy & effectual way of securing happiness is mortification. The monasteries, nuns & priests of this sects are numerous. As Buddhism is the only system which distinctly provides for a future state, it is, for want of a better, the refuge of all Chinese in prospect of death. ~~Cotrology~~ There is a temple found in every village, & idols are as numerous as human invention can make them, but they are not as obscene as those of India. Priests are generally ignorant. Notwithstanding the general prevalence of idolatry the Chinese are remarkably indifferent to all religions. Their attention is diverted from worship by the most trivial circumstance, temples are crumbling & priests are so poorly supported that many of them are mendicants.

Mohamedans, whose ~~tenets~~ probably entered China in the eighth century, are tolerably numerous ~~in China~~. They are however very ignorant concerning the doctines of Mohammed & only differ from the other sects by abstaining from certain meats. They disclaim idolatry but conform to it as far as is necessary to qualify them for office.

Christianity is supposed with some probability to have been preached in this Empire by the Nestorians during the 7th century. The first attempt to introduce the religion of the cross there of which we have any authentic account was made by Innocent 4th. A.D. 1246 when

Khan threatened the invasion of Europe, that Pontiff sent an embassy to convert him. Louis while on his crusade afterwards sent several friars for the same purpose. All these efforts proved abortive. Nothing was done ~~for the ca~~ after the death of Louis until 1552. During that year Xavier embarked from Goa, but ~~designed~~ died in sight of the land to which he had destined himself. On his death, many Dominican, Augustine & Capuchin friars attempted without success to enter the celestial empire. In 1589 Michael Ruggiero & Matthew Ricci, Jesuits, obtained liberty to settle in Chau-Chew-foo. This privilege ~~was given~~ they acquired by resorting to a pious fraud, in declaring that their only object was acquaintance with the language & sciences of the Empire. Their learning was admired, while their religious sentiments were railed at. Observing this they rendered themselves popular by throwing off the dress of priests & assuming that of literati. To gratify the learned men they translated Euclids elements into Chinese. This step obtained for them the privilege of instituting a church at Nankin. Twelve years after their arrival the Emperor admitted them to a personal interview & assigned them a salary. As long as Jesuits had the sole management of the mission, it went on peaceably & successfully. But when the pope granted ingress into China to friars of all orders, quarrels arose which degraded them in the eyes of the natives. In 1665 they were ~~expelled~~ condemned for turbulence & banished to Canton. Six years after this the Jesuit Verbiest got into favor by his knowledge of astronomy & in six years more an edict was obtained, allowing the exercise of the ~~Roman Catholic~~ Christian religion ~~in China~~. The subsequent history of the Roman Catholic missionaries ~~in China~~ is marked by constant collision with government & wrangling among themselves. The principal ~~theme~~ cause of dispute among themselves was the meaning of 'tien' the supreme object of Chinese worship. One party contended that it meant God & that therefore the religious rites of the Chinese

idolatrous. The other contended that the Ch properly translates heaven & that the chinese are idolaters. In 1700 the Emperor, in the office of peacemaker, among his children (as the priests profess to be) decreed that the word teen means the true God & that chinese customs are only political. To oppose this edict & settle forever the dispute, the Pope sent out an Apostolic legate. The Emperor enraged at what he considered an attempt to legislate over his subjects ordered all who differed from himself to depart to Canton in 5 days & embark for Europe. After this the Jesuits, who had contended for the translation made by the Emperor again enjoyed the ascendancy.

In 1723 there were in the empire 300 priests & 300.000 catholics. During this year, being suspected of ambition, their prospects were again clouded by an edict of banishment. A majority of them however evaded the edict by concealment. They clandestinely disseminated their doctrines for 13 years. At the expiration of that period they were searched for with uncommon eagerness & perseverance. Multitudes apostatized. Of those who were faithful some were tortured with inquisitorial cruelty & others were slain. The next year, the emperor published an edict of entire toleration.

In 1805-11-15-23 persecuting decrees were published, but were not rigorously executed. During the present century the Roman Catholic mission has been in a low & declining state. At present it includes 6 bishops, 12 European & 80 native priests & 215000 nominal members of the Church. ~~The history of its Sects that Christian foreign preachers have entered China, that those who entered under discouraging circumstances have, afterwards become popular, that when they have been banished, either deception, ambition, or imprudence has been justly chargeable to them.~~

The Rev Robt Morrison first Protestant Missionary to China arrived at Canton in 1807. In 1813 Mr & mrs Milne joined him but by his advice removed in 1815 to Malacca. In 1829 & 30 he was joined by Mess Bridgman & Gutzlaff. In 1833 by Mess Tracy Williams & Thos Williams as a printer. These 6 are all who are now engaged in preaching in China. Dr Morrison's dictionary will render invaluable assistance to future missionaries. The whole Bible book of common prayer

Westminster catechism, commentary on the epistles & many tracts have been translated & extensively circulated. The facts that the whole empire reads one language & that the Chinese are emphatically a travelling people within their own territory, present opportunity for circulating books among them unknown in other countries. Even if missionaries cannot gain entrance into the country they can preach the gospel by publishing tracts at Canton & our neighboring islands, for distribution among Chinese sailors. In this way tracts have been sent to the most remote parts of the Empire. Says the Miss. Herald Budhism was introduced into this empire by means of books & may it not be subverted by the same means? But we have no reason to believe that the living preacher may not soon enter China. The history of Roman Catholic missions shews that the national prejudice against foreigners is not invincible. Jesuits entered the celestial empire. Though they entered it under most discouraging circumstances & their number amounted at one time to 300,000. they became popular. When persecuted either deception, ambition, or imprudence was chargeable upon them. If they braved the dangers of Christ. The people of China are friendly. Only the officers oppose foreigners. The fact that travellers who are willing to bribe the mandarins readily gain access to the people shews that the execution of the non intercourse laws depends upon them & that if Christians can gain their favor, the difficulty will be overcome. If that favor has been bestowed on papists would it not be bestowed on men governed by the genuine principles of the Gospel? This question is no longer unanswered. Gutzlaff is 300 miles in the interior & meets with more encouragement than he expected. Says he in his letter from the interior "The time of seperation is past. The local mandarins are mostly in favor of free intercourse, & obey reluctantly the imperial edicts, whilst the nation receives us with open arms.

See - Chinese Repository. Rees Encyclopedia J J Henderson
Gutzlaffs voyages.